MMR_0065 James Tangney

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM'S NEWEST MMRs

NMR NO. 65 JAMES TANGNEY
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JIM TANGNEY was born in Aurora, Illinois 54 years ago. His father worked on the CB&Q for 40 years, and his grandfather worked for years for the Northwestern. Jim broke the pattern by becoming an electrical engineer.

He has had a lifelong interest in modeling, but until about 1955 his chief interest was in model airplanes. He was a member of the five-man team representing the U.S. in the 1952 Wakefield International Model Airplane Meet. Later, deciding that he was getting too old to run after model airplanes, he became more and more active in the model railroading hobby, joined the NMRA in 1965, and became a life member a few years ago.

Jim's greatest interest is in scratch-building traction models in HO scale. Photoengraving, casting in metal and epoxy, motor building, and gear cutting are techniques used in his prize-winning models. Contest awards include four National first place ribbons and three Regional Best-of-Shows. Some of his models appeared on the cover of December 1972 issue of the **BULLETIN.**

Layout operation at the Tangney's house has had to take second place to Jim's model building, so it is far from complete. It has point-to-point interurban operation with a background of characteristics taken from the Chicago, Aurora and Elgin, the Illinois Terminal, and the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric Company. The main line has 48-inch minimum radius curves however, so steam can be run on it, too.

Jim's Achievement Certificates include Motive Power; Cars; Structures; Electrical Engineer; Civil Engineer; Association; Volunteer; and Author. He feels that while the Achievement Program has received a lot of bad press in the past, it is a very worthwhile activity of the NMRA, and that the best course for those who find fault with the program is to try to improve it from the inside, rather than sitting back and boycotting it until it pleases them.

Jim is currently serving as Contest Chairman for both the Pacific Coast Region and the Coast Division. In Coast Division he is trying out a new contest program to attract the "average modeler". The new program has two levels of competition, one for "experts" and one for the person who has not yet attained a certain level of accomplishment. It is hoped that some of them will eventually develop into experts. In the meantime they are encouraged to participate in contests without having to see the prizes all go to the "experts".

Jim's wife, Olive, holds the rating of Life Master in the American Contract Bridge League, and she is delighted that Jim has qualified for the Master Model Railroader.